

State Tax Commission
Michigan Certified Assessing Officer (MCAO) Program FAQ's

How do I get into the MCAO Program?

Programs are offered each year in January and July. Applications for the January program are accepted from September 1 until November 1. Applications for the July program are accepted from March 1 until May 1. Applications are available during each of those periods on the State Tax Commission website at: (www.michigan.gov/statetaxcommission).

Is it hard to get into the Program?

It is a competitive program. The State Tax Commission (STC) generally receives more applications than available spots in each class.

How many students do you accept into each Program?

We accept a maximum of 35 students into each Program.

How do you decide who gets into the Program?

In addition to submitting an application and resume, applicants are required to write a one page summary on why they want to be accepted into the program. The application, resume and written summary are reviewed and utilized to make a final determination on who is accepted into each program.

If I don't get in do I have to reapply?

Applications are kept on file and reconsidered for admittance for the next available program. If an applicant is unsuccessful the 2nd time, they will have to reapply.

Are the Programs only offered in Lansing?

The January and July Programs are offered in Lansing. A January Program is also offered in St. Ignace every other even numbered year.

How long is the Program?

The MCAO Program is a 16 month program.

What is the format for the Program?

The program is an on-line lecture hybrid consisting of 4 semesters and 18 chapters. Each of the 18 Chapters are taught over a 3 week period. Students have on-line posting requirements and assignments due for each Chapter. At the end of each Chapter, students attend a one day practicum session with their instructor.

Are the Practicums in Lansing? Are they on Saturdays or during the week?

Practicums are held on Saturdays from 8 A.M. to 5 P.M. The majority of the Practicums for the July class are in Lansing. The majority of the Practicums for the January classes are in Lansing for the Lansing group and St. Ignace for the U.P. group. There are two chapters in which the Practicum sessions are not held in the normal classroom location. One is a field work session where students go into the field for hands-on training and one is a requirement to attend a local Board of Review.

What is the time commitment for the on-line portion of the class?

That will vary by student. Students are required to log into the on-line classroom at least two days a week and encouraged to log in every day.

How is the program graded?

The Program is a point's based program. Points are given for on-line postings, assignments and there is an exam at the end of each semester. Students must receive 75% of the total possible points at the end of the program in order to become Michigan Certified Assessing Officers.

Is there an overall exam that I have to take at the end?

No there is no overall exam, only the exams at the end of each Semester. Semester exams are given on Fridays.

How much does the Program cost?

The current cost of the program is \$2,000 paid in 4 payments of \$500 each, due at the beginning of each semester.

What can I certify after I graduate?

For 2014, an assessor holding an MCAO certification can assess any local unit with a state equalized value is less than \$443,000,000, or a combined state equalized value of the commercial and industrial real and personal classifications, including utility and special acts properties, does not exceed 20 percent of \$443,000,000 (or \$89,000,000). The State Tax Commission annually determines these amounts and that information is available on the STC website.

Is it true I am going to be on probation after I graduate?

Yes, it is STC policy that all newly certified Michigan Certified Assessing Officers are on probation for one year after graduation.

When can I start taking the prerequisite classes to get my Michigan Advanced Assessing Officer (MAAO) Certification?

You cannot take any MAAO classes until you hold a MCAO certification.

I heard it is impossible to fail out of the program once you get in?

Not true. MCAO students must achieve a minimum 65% for each semester. Students whose overall semester grade falls between 60% and 65% will be allowed one probationary semester to bring their accumulative overall grade to 70% or above. If after the probationary semester your grade remains below 70%, you are removed from the program.